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All traditions of the seclusion of children rest on an authentic custom, the memory of which has not been entirely lost. Both De Langle (130, vol. 1, p. 81) and members of Gonzalez' expedition (90, p. 40) mention having seen huts where children were apparently secluded, guarded by adults.

FEAST HOUSE

A large house (*hare nui*) was built before a feast (*koro*) where young people gathered to play and sing. They lived in more or less promiscuity, and tradition says that they had many opportunities to make love and to have sexual intercourse. Foundations were laid for many marriages during the feast, but as evidenced by numerous tales, the feast houses were not for the young people only but for all invited guests. Routledge was told that the young people who shared in the dances had to be "white" (*ritorito*) which in Easter Island is almost synonymous with "fine." Routledge (194, p. 235) writes: "In connection with some or all of the *kaunga* (dancing grounds) there was a house where the party remained indoors for a long time previous to the dances, in order 'to get their complexions,' a touch which shows that a white skin was admired." In traditional records of *koro* some confusion may have arisen between the seclusion before the feast and the actual *koro*.

INITIATION RITES

When the children between the ages of 13 and 15 years were submitted to seclusion, rites were celebrated which had perhaps the character of a consecration. Little is known about these ceremonies, and their significance is obscure. The boys and girls who went through the ceremonies were termed *poki take* and *poki manu* (bird children). Routledge (194, p. 266) was told that the *take* ceremonies were dropped about 30 years before the arrival of the missionaries and that no living person had attended such a ceremony. The oldest man in the village when Routledge was there stated that the *take* ceremony was intended for adults and that the father performed the rites when the son was born. My information was obtained from Viriamo through Tepano. She said that boys and girls were sent to Motu-nui when they were 13 years of age. They sojourned on the island for three months, living in separate caves. Food was taken to them in canoes, and ornaments (*tahonga*, wooden balls) and special breechcloths of tapa called *hami mama* were sent them by their parents. The children were given red and white ocher (*kiea* and *marikuru*) for the painting of their bodies. White bands were painted around the arms and feet, concentric white circles on the back at the level of the waist, and two white rings on the buttocks.

The ceremony following seclusion was called *te manu mo ta poki* (the bird for the child). I could discover no better explanation of this feast and its benefit than that given by Routledge, which is vague and probably incor-

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of the English manager of the company which owns the island. At Mataveri the people who were to participate in the ceremony gathered for some time (Routledge says for a month) and spent their leisure time feasting and dancing. A big hut was built there, and great uprights were planted like columns in the ground. One of them is still standing, another has fallen which has one side carved like the back of a big image. Other such blocks and a huge basin stand in the Residence garden.

Feast of the Bird-man

The feast began in the austral spring (probably September or October), when *manu-tara* were nesting on Motu-nui. Only dominant, victorious tribes took part in the quest for the egg and the attendant ceremonies, for the privileges at stake were too important to be vested in an inferior or defeated group (*mata-kio*). The victorious warriors (*mata-toa*) who were entitled to live at Mataveri while awaiting the coming of the *manu-tara* were frequently referred to under the collective name of *ao* (*ka oho Mataveri ki te ao*; go to Mataveri to the dominant group), which means victory and consequently designates those who had obtained power over others through a successful military expedition. The word, in this sense, probably has no connection with the dance paddle, *ao*.

Routledge (194, p. 258) says that "only those belonging to the clan in the ascendancy for the time being could enter on the quest." That is, there was only one tribe who, for political reasons, had the privilege of performing the rites of the bird cult. The envied position was retained by this group for years, unless it yielded its rights to another friendly tribe. The jealousy provoked by this monopoly must have led to quarrels and even war. (See 194, p. 258.) However, it seems to me more likely that several powerful lineages participated in the egg race and the ceremonies. Roussel (190) clearly mentions a rivalry between several parties, and Routledge (194, p. 258) says that sometimes "clans" took part in the quest.

Routledge (194, p. 259) states that the preliminaries for the feast began almost a year before the discovery of the egg. She probably confused the time sequence and placed at the beginning activities at Mataveri which I believe occurred at the end of the feast. I was told that the feast began no earlier than January and perhaps even later. Possibly those attending the feast stopped at Mataveri on their way to Orongo. As my theory is supported only by my own reconstruction I will retain Routledge's scheme in the following description.

The people who were to take leading parts in the festivities left their villages to reside in Mataveri with their wives and children. There they lived in a big house or several houses, which were not destroyed until the second half of the nineteenth century. The long months of waiting were made joyous

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574 brother who in his turn gave them to his son. Sometimes they were given to
431 the wife of the man who made the *koro*; she passed them on to her brother or her father.

602 I was told that the son could give 5 or 10 fowls to his father on the
554 occasion of the *umu onakena*. The father distributed them among people who had helped him when he was hungry (in time of famine for instance). This present was called *moa haka kio* (to reward with fowls; literally, "fowls made prisoners").

During the feast of the *koro* the father or the mother praised the generosity of the son:

[539]

E poki	koro	nui	e mooku	mo	te matua	e	(e nau e)
Son	of feast	great	for me	for	the father		(for the mother)

If he had already made a *koro* for one of the parents the formula would be a little different:

[539]

E poki	koro	nui	mo	maua	ko	nua	e
Son	of feast	great	for	me	and	for your mother	

431 The *koro* is closely related to a custom which is now prevalent in Easter
602 Island and which obliges the men to make presents to the brothers or the cousins of their wives. Generally it is only one brother or one cousin who receives these presents. I was told by all my informants that "the brother-in-law who is chosen is the best-liked one, and sometimes the others become jealous." A husband must also make presents to the sister of his wife. Every one who receives a present must make a return gift on a later occasion, and if he has self respect he will give more than he has received. The *mahia* or present to a brother-in-law or a cousin cannot be something made by one's self; it must be a gift obtained from a parent or a friend. As Tepano told me, "The one who gives you fowls, he only is your brother, only the fowls have value." That is, the symbolism of the gift stresses a close personal relationship between the giver and the cousin chosen as recipient. The *mahia* may also be a circulating present which passes through many hands according to the old *koro* system.

KORO HOUSE

345 In connection with the *koro* is always mentioned a big house, also called *koro*, where young people spent their time playing various games. This house was the material symbol of the generosity of the *koro* giver. Tradition has preserved descriptions of *koro* houses which were several hundred feet long and more than 20 feet high. Materials for the construction of the house were often provided by relatives or friends who aided the giver of the *koro* in his expenditures. Tepano said that *koro* houses were intended for young

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people, both boys and girls, who resided in them for months, generously provided with all sorts of delicacies, but tales seem to indicate that adults also could enjoy the careless life of the *koro* houses. Certain tapus seem to have been enforced on the *koro*, and definite rules were observed in them; no religious ceremonies are mentioned apart from the consecration of the house by an *ariki*.

The host, whose own house was near the *koro*, supervised everything and enjoyed the sight of all the people having a good time. Food was distributed in abundance, and sometimes more than 10 earth ovens were cooking at the same time. The sweet potatoes and chickens which were served during the feast had been accumulated by the owner of the *koro* over a long period of time, and his relatives or friends contributed presents of food, given to him under the condition that some day he would help them on a similar occasion. The last day of the feast was especially gay, and when the rejoicings were over the *koro* house was pulled down with the aid of wooden carved lizards. (See 194, p. 234.) The poles which had been used in the *koro* construction were carefully guarded to be used for the next celebration.

The *koro* houses were supposed to be kept clean. Tradition tells of a *koro* house to which the *ariki* Tuu-ko-ihu was invited and which he left because he saw in it the excrement of a child:

> They built a *koro* house in Ahu-a-pepe. They made a very long house. They had yams, sweet potatoes, and chickens. They lit the oven, they threw the food into it and cooked it. They sent a message to Tuu-ko-ihu to call him to this new *koro* where food was ready. A child defecated in the house. The king came and went in and spoke to the owner of the *koro*, "Now take out the food for the king, put in the sugar cane." The head of Oroi was hanging down in the house. Tuu-ko-ihu noticed it and recognized it, "Here is the head of Oroi," he said, "Rest here, your teeth used formerly to eat turtle meat in the foreign country of Marae-renga."
>
> They gathered bananas in the house. Tuu-ko-ihu saw the excrement of the child. He could no longer eat sugar cane, banana, sweet potatoes, chicken, or fish. He got sick because of this excrement. Tuu-ko-ihu took the hanging head and went to his home. The people in the *koro* house said, "The king does not eat the food. Who took the head which was hanging down?" The owner of the *koro* saw the excrement and said, "That's why the king did not eat. Stinking is the excrement of the child." He noticed then that the head was no longer there and that the king had taken it with him.
>
> The owner of the *koro* gathered chickens, fish, tuna fish, and eels, and enlisted the workers to help him to recover the head. They removed the stones, they dug the ground until they reached the house of Tuu-ko-ihu where the head had been buried. They dug everywhere, even under the seat of Tuu-ko-ihu. There they found the head and took it from the king.
>
> The owner was working in a banana plantation. He saw a rat, chased it and digging in the hole of the rat found the skull (again).

Areauti

The *areauti* feast, held in fall and winter, was probably similar to the *koro*. For both feasts a special hut was erected, and both were given at the

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574 345 expense of a man wishing to enhance his prestige by a show of lavishness. Eyraud (81, vol. 38, pp. 66-67) describes the *areauti* as follows:

> The *paina* is succeeded by the *areauti*, in which there are no more big races, no complicated evolutions, and no palatable sweet potato banquets. On the grounds of the feast are built big houses, I should say huts higher than the ordinary ones. When the houses are finished, people gather in groups, placing themselves in two lines to sing. And what they sing! I must confess that this poetry is very primitive and not very varied. The event which has most struck the imagination is generally the subject of the chant. If a new disease has been introduced, let us say smallpox, it will be sung at the *areauti*. On the occasion of one of these feasts, they took my sheep and roasted and ate them. The roasted sheep have been sung about for I know not how long. Please do not think that they compose a poem for the occasion. They are well satisfied with repeating, in different tones, the matter itself, sometimes the name which expresses it. This continues from the beginning of the feast to the end.

Puke

574 222 [787] This feast has not been recorded previously. According to my informant, it was always celebrated in the month of August (*horaiti*). Five children went to the shore to pick up *tari* (a seaweed). My informant insisted that each child took ten seaweeds, but such precision may be doubted. The children started to run as fast as they could, and adults tried to hit them with the seaweed collected by the children. A child who was hit by the *tari* was supposedly destined for a premature death, those who escaped without having been touched by the seaweed could expect a long life. The *puke* were organized by the entire village and were occasions for feasting.

Kaunga

574 535 The *kaunga* was a feast reserved for young people and its chief feature was a dance performed by boys and girls on a narrow place paved with pebbles. Routledge (194, p. 234) claims to have seen four such strips; I saw only one, but Tepano mentioned two, one at Vakahipo and the other at Hangoteo. The young people danced in Indian file, each girl preceded by a boy. The dancers held dancing clubs (*rapa*) in both hands and advanced and retreated gracefully. When a father decided to have a *kaunga* dance performed, all the other families sent their children. The parents sat as mere spectators of the dance.

574 I never heard, as did Routledge (194, p. 284), that this feast was in honor of a mother. The *kaunga* feast has been frequently confused with the seclusion of young people for the purpose of producing fair complexions before being exhibited at feasts. However, the feast was probably an opportunity for the *neru* or the *huru* girls (those who had been secluded) to display the whiteness of their complexions. Marriages were frequently decided upon at this feast.

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527 cross-legged around it, howling all night by the light of flares.
778 As no information was volunteered to us about such celebrations, the natives were asked if they had ever known a similar figure, and an old man at once replied that there had existed one just like the description, made of reeds, as a memorial of a dead wife or "fine" child; it stood in front of the house, or was sometimes carried to a hillock where the people assembled to mourn. One of the officers of the La Pérouse Expedition also described a figure seen near a platform; it was 11 feet in height, clothed in white tapa ("*étoffe blanche du pays*"); it had hanging round the neck a basket covered with white, and by the side of this bag the figure of a child 2 feet long. This seems to confirm the information that it was intended to represent a woman.

527 Another great festivity, given for a father either living or dead, was the "KORO." This was a house-party on a very extended scale. A special dwelling made with poles and thatched was put
[342] up, and, according to accounts, which surround it no doubt with a halo from the past, measured some hundreds of feet in length and 20 feet in height. An old man stated that at a celebration at which he was present there were "a hundred guests," a number which is probably a guess, but the addition that there were "ten cooking-places" sounds like memory.
[431] Invitations to these festivities were much in request, as there was "no work to do"; presents of food were brought to the hero who distributed them to the party. They seem to have lasted indefinitely, going on for months, and the time was passed with various entertainments. The old people sang, the young people
[825 danced, and the host, who lived in a little house near, came and looked on. On the last day there was a great feast, and the house
412] was broken down with the aid of the carved wooden lizards, which are associated with the island (fig. 117). We were
[343] puzzled in coming across a rough stone building, near Anakena, which seemed to be neither ahu, dwelling, nor chicken-house; it had been, the men told us, a shelter for the posts of the koro, where they were kept in readiness for the next celebration.

527 There was yet another entertainment which is said to have
535 been in honour of a mother, as a koro was of a father. In at least four different places on the island are to be seen a dancing-
●345 ground known as "KAUNGA." It is a narrow strip paved with pebbles, over 200 feet in length by 2 feet in width, and not

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unlike the paved approach to some of the ahu. A demonstration was given of the way it was used. The dancers, "fine men, fine women," as was explained with emphasis, proceeding along it single file, holding rapa in both hands. In connection with some or all of the kaunga there was a house where the party remained indoors for a long time previous to the dances, in order to "get their complexions good," a touch which shows that a white skin was admired.

These feasts were held in certain months only, determined by the appearance of the heavens after nightfall. On the extremity of the eastern headland there is an outcrop of boulders, one of which is incised with a spiral design; the place is known as "Ko Te Papa-ui-hetuu," or, "The Rock-for-seeing-stars," and here the old men came to watch the constellations. About two hundred yards from these boulders there is another engraved stone on which ten cup-shaped depressions are visible; this represented, it is said, "a map of the stars."

The season for the Paina depended on the position of the three central stars of Orion, with regard to which the following story is related. A certain married woman, on going down to bathe, was carried off by a stranger. When her husband discovered this, he slew her in his anger, and she fled up to be a star. The husband then took their two boys, one in each hand, and followed her to the sky, where the three form the belt of Orion. The wife, however, would have nothing to do with them, and remained in a separate part of the heavens. This is the only nature myth which we encountered on the island.